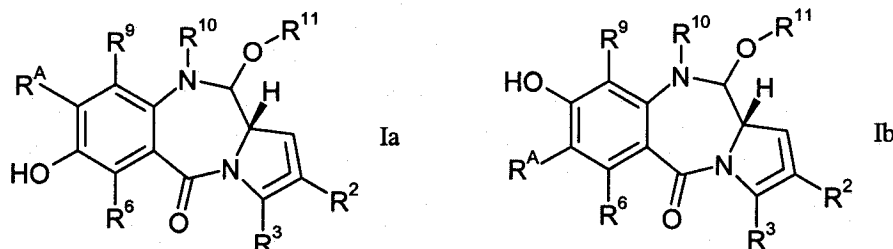


Amendments to the Claims:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A compound of formula **Ia** or **Ib**:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt[[s]] ~~or solvates~~ thereof, wherein:

the dotted lines indicate the optional presence of a double bond between C1 and C2 or C2 and C3;

R² and R³ are independently selected from -H, =O, =CH₂, -CN, -R, OR, halo, =CH-R, O-SO₂-R, CO₂R and COR;

R⁶ and R⁹ are independently selected from H, R, OH, OR, SH, SR, NH₂, NHR, NRR', nitro, Me₃Sn and halo;

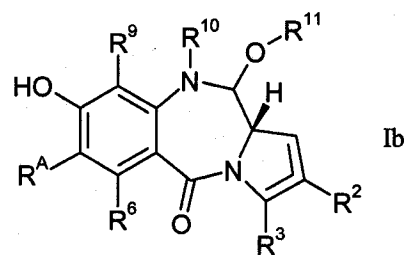
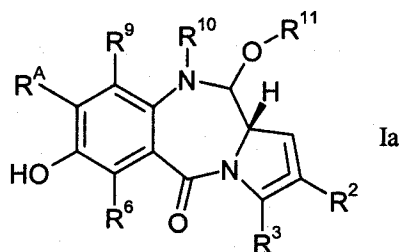
where R and R' are independently selected from optionally substituted C₁₋₁₂ alkyl, heterocyclyl groups having 3 to 20 ring atoms of which 1 to 10 are heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of N, O and S and aryl or heteroaryl groups having 5 to 20 ring atoms, the heteroaryl groups having one or more heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of N, O and S, wherein the optional substituents are independently selected from halo, hydroxy, ether, alkoxy, acetal, hemiacetal, ketal, hemiketal, oxo, thione, imino, formyl, acyl, carboxy, thiocarboxy, thiolcarboxy, thionocarboxy, imidic acid, hydroxamic acid, ester, acyloxy, oxycaroyloxy, amino, amido, thioamido, acylamido, aminocaronyloxy, ureido, guanidino, tetrazolyl, amidino, nitro, nitroso, azido, cyano, isocyano, cyanato, isocyanato, thiocyano, isothiocyano, sulfhydryl, disulfide, sulfine, sulfonyl, sulfino, sulfo, sulfinate, sulfonate, sulfinyloxy, sulfonyloxy, sulfate, sulfamyl, sulfonamido, sulfamino, sulfonamino, sulfinamino, phosphino, phosphor, phosphinyl, phosphono, phosphonate, phosphonooxy, phosphate, phosphorous acid, phosphite, phosphoramidite, or phosphoramidate;

R^A is selected from H, R, OR, SH, SR, NH₂, NHR, NRR', nitro, Me₃Sn and halo;

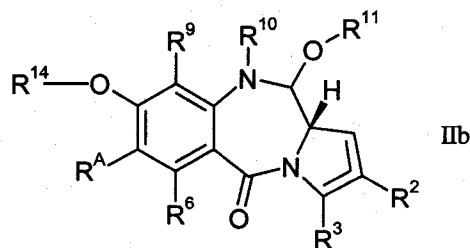
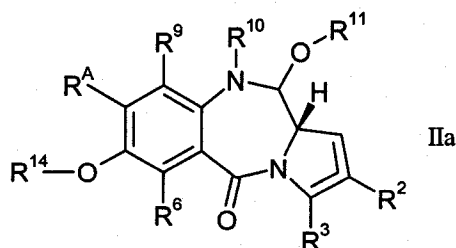
R¹⁰ is a carbamate-based nitrogen protecting group; and

R¹¹ is an oxygen protecting group.

2. (Original) A compound according to claim 1, wherein R^A is independently selected from H, OR, SH, SR, NH_2 , NHR, NRR' and halo.
3. (Previously presented) A compound according to claim 1, wherein R^{11} is THP or a silyl oxygen protecting group.
4. (Previously presented) A compound according to claim 1, wherein R^{10} is BOC or Troc.
5. (Previously presented) A compound according to claim 1, wherein R^9 is H.
6. (Previously presented) A compound according to claim 1, wherein R^2 is R.
7. (Previously presented) A compound according to claim 1, wherein R^6 is selected from H, OH, OR, SH, NH_2 , nitro and halo.
- 8-25. (Canceled)
26. (Currently Amended) A method of synthesising a compound of formula **Ia** or **Ib**:



from a compound of formula **IIa** or **IIb** respectively:



comprising ~~removing R¹⁴~~ deprotecting a C7 or C8 hydroxyl moiety.

wherein:

the dotted lines indicate the optional presence of a double bond between C1 and C2 or C2 and C3;

R² and R³ are independently selected from -H, =O, =CH₂, -CN, -R, OR, halo, =CH-R, O-SO₂-R, CO₂R and COR;

R⁶ and R⁹ are independently selected from H, R, OH, OR, SH, SR, NH₂, NHR, NRR', nitro, Me₃Sn and halo;

where R and R' are independently selected from optionally substituted C₁₋₁₂ alkyl, heterocyclyl groups having 3 to 20 ring atoms of which 1 to 10 are heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of N, O and S and aryl or heteroaryl groups having 5 to 20 ring atoms, the heteroaryl groups having one or more heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of N, O and S, wherein the optional substituents are independently selected from halo, hydroxy, ether, alkoxy, acetal, hemiacetal, ketal, hemiketal, oxo, thione, imino, formyl, acyl, carboxy, thiocarboxy, thiolcarboxy, thionocarboxy, imidic acid, hydroxamic acid, ester, acyloxy, oxycaroyloxy, amino, amido, thioamido, acylamido, aminocaronyloxy, ureido, guanidino, tetrazolyl, amidino, nitro, nitroso, azido, cyano, isocyano, cyanato, isocyanato, thiocyano, isothiocyano, sulfhydryl, disulfide, sulfine, sulfonyl, sulfino, sulfo, sulfinate, sulfonate, sulfinyloxy, sulfonyloxy, sulfate, sulfamyl, sulfonamido, sulfamino, sulfonamino, sulfinamino, phosphino, phosphor, phosphinyl, phosphono, phosphonate, phosphonooxy, phosphate, phosphorous acid, phosphite, phosphoramidite, or phosphoramidate;

R^A is selected from H, R, OR, SH, SR, NH₂, NHR, NRR', nitro, Me₃Sn and halo;

R¹⁰ is a carbamate-based nitrogen protecting group;

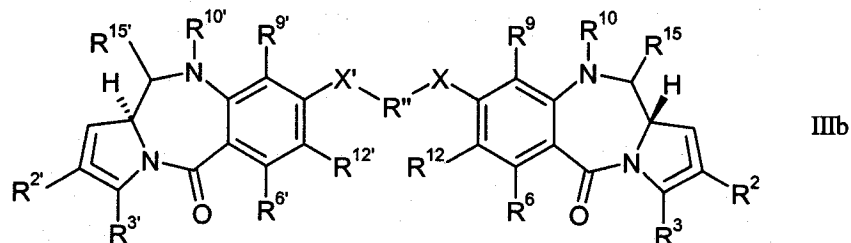
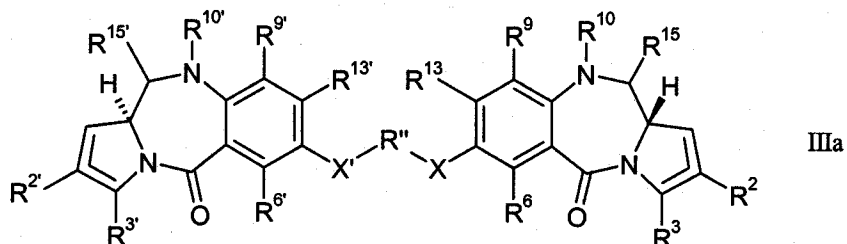
R¹¹ is an oxygen protecting group; and

R¹⁴ is an oxygen protecting group orthogonal to R¹¹.

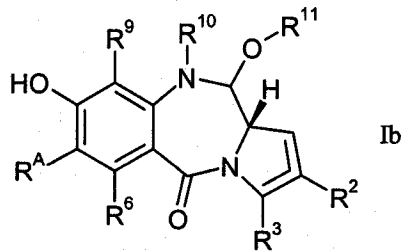
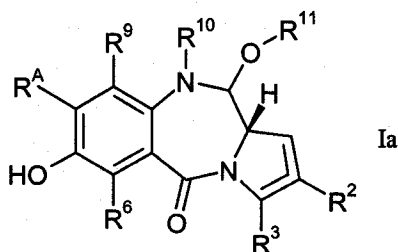
27. (Original) A method according to claim 26, wherein R¹⁴ is benzyl ether and R^A is OMe or H.

28. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein R¹¹ is THP or a silyl oxygen protecting group.

29. (Currently amended) A method of synthesising a compound of formula **IIIa** or **IIIb**:



or a solvate thereof, from a compound of formula **Ia** or **Ib** respectively:



wherein:

the dotted lines indicate the optional presence of a double bond between C1 and C2 or C2 and C3;

R² and R³ are independently selected from -H, =O, =CH₂, -CN, -R, OR, halo, =CH-R, O-SO₂-R, CO₂R and COR;

R⁶, R⁹, R¹² and R¹³ are independently selected from H, R, OH, OR, SH, SR, NH₂, NHR, NRR', nitro, Me₃Sn and halo; where R and R' are independently selected from optionally substituted C₁₋₁₂ alkyl, heterocyclyl groups having 3 to 20 ring atoms of which 1 to 10 are heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of N, O and S and aryl or heteroaryl groups having 5 to 20 ring atoms, the heteroaryl groups having one or more heteroatoms independently selected from the group consisting of N, O and S, wherein the optional substituents are independently selected from halo, hydroxy, ether, alkoxy, acetal, hemiacetal, ketal, hemiketal, oxo, thione, imino, formyl, acyl, carboxy, thiocarboxy, thiolcarboxy, thionocarboxy, imidic acid, hydroxamic acid, ester, acyloxy, oxycaroyloxy, amino, amido, thioamido, acylamido,

aminocaronyloxy, ureido, guanidino, tetrazolyl, amidino, nitro, nitroso, azido, cyano, isocyano, cyanato, isocyanato, thiocyno, isothiocyno, sulfhydryl, disulfide, sulfine, sulfonyl, sulfino, sulfo, sulfinate, sulfonate, sulfinyloxy, sulfonyloxy, sulfate, sulfamyl, sulfonamido, sulfamino, sulfonamino, sulfinamino, phosphino, phosphor, phosphinyl, phosphono, phosphonate, phosphonooxy, phosphate, phosphorous acid, phosphite, phosphoramidite, or phosphoramidate;

R^A is selected from H, R, OR, SH, SR, NH_2 , NHR, NRR' , nitro, Me_3Sn and halo;

R^{10} is a carbamate-based nitrogen protecting group and R^{15} is either $O-R^{11}$, wherein R^{11} is an oxygen protecting group, or OH, or R^{10} and R^{15} together form a double bond between N10 and C11; and

where R'' is a C_{3-12} alkylene group, and each X is ~~independently selected from O, S, or NH~~; and R^2 , R^3 , R^6 , R^9 , R^{10} , R^{12} , R^{13} and R^{15} are all independently selected from the same lists as previously defined for R^2 , R^3 , R^6 , R^9 , R^{10} , R^{12} , R^{13} and R^{15} respectively, comprising either:

- (a) reacting a compound of formula **Ia** or **Ib** with a compound having the formula $Y-R''-Y'$ to yield a compound of formula **IIIa** or **IIIb**; or
- (b)
 - (i) reacting a compound of formula **Ia** or **Ib** with a compound having the formula $Y-R''-YProt$, and
 - (ii) converting YProt in the reaction product from (i) to Y' , and
 - (iii) reacting the product from (ii) with a compound of formula **Ia** or **Ib** to yield a compound of formula **IIIa** or **IIIb**;

wherein:

Y, Y' are independently selected from OH, I, Br, Cl, mesylate or tosylate;

YProt is a precursor to Y' or a chemically protected form of Y' having a protecting group that is orthogonal to R^{10} and R^{11} .

30. Canceled.

31. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 29, wherein Y and Y' are I.

32. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 29, wherein Y is OH and YProt is O-benzyl.